

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 STATE 250945  
ORIGIN EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DHA-05 SS-15 IO-13 CU-04 BIB-01  
NSCE-00 INRE-00 NEA-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01  
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 USIE-00  
/081 R

DRAFTED BY EUR/EE UHGLENN LCB  
APPROVED BY EUR WHLUERS  
EUR/RPM :JKORNBLUM  
D/HA :CBRODY  
EUR EHRON (SUBSTANCE)  
EUR/EE CWSCHMIDT  
C: MNIMITZ  
S/MS:MSHULMAN

-----118123 191657Z /46  
O P 191611Z OCT 77  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY PRAGUE IMMEDIATE  
INFO AMCONSUL MUNICH PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 250945

BELGRADE FOR USCSCE DEL, MUNICH FOR GILMORE

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS:SHUM, CZ, PGOV, CSCE

SUBJECT:MAJOR CHARTER 77 FIGURES REPORTEDLY CONVICTED AND  
SENTENCED.

REF :MUNICH 2963

1. ACCORDING TO REUTERS REPORTS RECEIVED HERE, TRIAL  
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PAGE 02 STATE 250945

OF MAJOR CHARTER 77 ACTIVISTS (VACLAV HAVEL, FRANTISEK  
PAVLICEK, JIRI LEDERER, AND OTA ORNEST) ON CHARGES OF  
ANTI-STATE ACTIVITY, SUBVERSION, AND CONTACT WITH SUCH  
EXILES AS PAVEL TIGRID AND JIRI PELIKAN BEGAN ON  
OCTOBER 17. DEFENDANTS WERE ORIGINALLY APPREHENDED FOR,  
INTER ALIA, ASSISTING IN THE DISTRIBUTION IN THE WEST OF  
CZECHOSLOVAK LITERATURE BANNED BY THE REGIME. REUTERS

STATES THAT SOURCES CLOSE TO THE DEFENDANTS REPORT THAT THE FOUR DEFENDANTS WERE CONVICTED AND SENTENCED ON OCTOBER 18. REPORTEDLY TWO OF THE FOUR RECEIVED PRISON TERMS AND TWO SUSPENDED SENTENCES.

2. DURING AN EASTERN EUROPEAN EMBASSY RECEPTION ON EVENING OF OCTOBER 17, EUR/EE DEPUTY DIRECTOR RAISED SUBJECT OF THE TRIAL WITH CZECHOSLOVAK AMBASSADOR JOHANNES, WHO, CLAIMING THAT HE HAD ONLY SEEN US PRESS REPORTS, SAID TRIAL WAS NOT CONNECTED WITH CHARTER 77.

DEPARTMENT OFFICER SAID ;E THOUGHT THIS WOULD BE HARD FOR THE AMERICAN PUBLIC TO BELIEVE IN LIGHT OF FACT THAT MOST OF THE DEFENDANTS WERE PROMINENT FIGURES IN THE CHARTER 77 EFFORT. HE INDICATED WE WERE CONCERNED BY IMPLICATIONS OF THE PRESS REPORTS WE HAD SEEN AND NOTED HIS VIEW THAT SUCH EVENTS COULD NOT HELP BUT HAVE A NEGATIVE AFFECT ON THE ATMOSPHERE OF OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS. JOHANNES REACTED RATHER SHARPLY, SAYING THAT THE TRIAL WAS AN INTERNAL CZECHOSLOVAK ACTION AND THAT THE US SHOULD NOT INTERFERE IN SUCH MATTERS. IN RESPONSE, DEPARTMENT OFFICER SAID WE HAD NO INTENTION OF INTERFERING IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS; HE HAD SIMPLY WISHED TO POINT OUT HOW SUCH ACTIONS WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY BE PERCEIVED IN THIS COUNTRY.

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 STATE 250945

3. SEPTTEL CONTAINS TEXT OF CONTINGENCY PRESS GUIDANCE PREPARED FOR DEPARTMENT'S NOON PRESS BRIEFING ON OCTOBER 18, AND THE EXCHANGE BETWEEN THE SPOKESMAN AND REPORTERS WHICH TOOK PLACE. ACTION ADDRESSEES MAY DRAW ON THIS GUIDANCE AS REQUIRED.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: THE AMBASSADOR SHOULD, AS SOON AS CONVENIENT, CONVEY TO THE CZECH GOVERNMENT THE FOLLOWING:

- THE TRIAL AND THE CONVICTIONS OF FOUR CZECH CITIZENS REPORTED IN THE PRESS APPEARS INCONSISTENT WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE CSCE FINAL ACT REGARDING THE FREER AND WIDER DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION OF ALL KINDS.

- MOREOVER, THREE OF THE INDIVIDUALS TRIED HAD BEEN DIRECTLY ASSOCIATED WITH EFFORTS TO SUPPORT FULL COMPLIANCE WITH THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT.

- THIS TRIAL TAKING PLACE DURING THE OPENING PHASE OF THE BELGRADE CONFERENCE RAISES QUESTIONS ABOUT THE SERIOUSNESS AND INTENT OF THE CZECH GOVERNMENT REGARDING THE OBJECTIVES OF THIS CONFERENCE AND THE FINAL ACT ITSELF.

- WE RAISE THIS ISSUE IN THE SPIRIT OF THE HELSINKI FINAL  
ACT FULLY REALIZING THAT JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS ARE ESSENTI-  
ALLY AN INTERNAL MATTER.

- YET SINCE THE REPORTED ACTIVITIES OF THESE INDIVIDUALS  
SO DIRECTLY RELATE TO THE OBJECTIVES OF THE CSCE CONFER-  
ENCE WE BELIEVE IT ESSENTIAL THAT THE AUTHORITIES IN  
CZECHOSLOVAKIA UNDERSTAND THAT WE EXPECT ADVERSE REACTIONS  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE AND THAT THESE EVENTS ARE LIKELY  
TO HAVE A NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE ATMOSPHERE IN OUR BILATERAL  
RELATIONS. VANCE

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## Message Attributes

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**TAGS:** SHUM, PGOV, CZ, CSCE, (HAVEL, VACLAV), (PAVLICEK, FRANTISEK), (LEDERER, JIRI), (ORNEST, OTA)  
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